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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MCT-01 SY-05 IO-13 /097 W
----------251746Z 109909 /43
R 251452Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4267
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, EG, LY, UR
SUBJECT: ANTI-QADHFI PRESS CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

1. ANTI-QADHAFI ITEMS ARE SPRINKLED AROUND FRONT PAGES OF LOCAL DAILIES APRIL 25 AND MUHSIN MUHAMMAD OF GUMHURIYYA WEIGHS IN WITH LENGTHY FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL CASTIGATING QADHAFI'S DETERMINATION TO EXECUTE SOVIET POLICY IN AFRICA. TONE OF CONDEMNATORY ARTICLES GENERALLY NON-EMOTIONAL, BUT SEVERAL ARTICLES EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT ALL EGYPTIANS CURRENTLY WORKING IN LIBYA MAY BE EXPELLED.

2. ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT: ALL PAPERS CITE REPORTS FROM "TRAVELLERS FROM LIBYA" THAT ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT MADE AGAINST QADHAFI APRIL 11. ALTHOUGH STORIES VARY, ALL COVER-
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AGE STATES THAT QADHAFI INJURED IN ATTEMPT, EITHER IN HAND OR SHOULDER. UNSUCCESSFUL ASSASSIN EITHER MEMBER OF QADHAFI BODYGUARD OR LIBYAN CIVILIAN, BUT ACCOUNTS AGREE THAT ATTEMPT OCCURRED IN BENGHAZI AND THAT ASSASSIN COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER ABORTIVE ATTEMPT.

3. WESTERN DESERT SUBVERSION: GUMHURIYYA REPORTS THAT

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QADHAFI HAS ALLOCATED 300 MILLION DINARS TO EFFORTS TO GAIN CONTROL OVER (EGYPTIAN) WESTERN DESERT AND TO INFLUENCE TRIBES ALONG BOARDER. AHRAM CHARGES THAT QADHAFI PERSONALLY VISITED ON MARCH 25 AND 27 CAMPS IN LIBYA (SITE UNSPECIFIED) WHERE SABOTEURS BEING TRAINED FOR MISSIONS IN EGYPT.

4. EGYPTIAN WORKERS IN LIBYA: ALL DAILIES CARRY ITEM FROM LIBYAN NEWS AGENCY THAT QADHAFI CONSIDERING TERMINATING CONTRACTS OF ALL EGYPTIAN SPECIALISTS IN LIBYA, ON GROUNDS THAT THEY EGYPTIAN AGENTS. AHRAM NOTES, IN ATTEMPTING TO TREAT THIS ITEM IN UP-BEAT FASHION, THAT EGYPT CURRENTLY SUFFERING FROM SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF SKILLED MANPOWER AND CANNOT PROVIDE TECHNICIANS WHICH MANY ARAB STATES REQUESTING. IMPLICATION IS THAT EGYPT CAN AND WILL FIND JOBS FOR ANY EGYPTIANS EXPELLED BY LIBYANS.

5. QADHAFI'S FOREIGN POLICY CONDEMNED: MUSHIN MUHAMMAD EDITORIAL, "THE SOVIETS ARE LAUGHING," CONTAINS LENGTHY CATALOG OF QADHAFI'S FOREIGN POLICY TERGIVERSATIONS. BOTTOM LINE IS THAT SUPPOSEDLY ANTI-COMMUNIST QADHAFI NOW DOING SOVIETS BIDDING, INCLUDING PAYING FOUR TIMES AS MUCH FOR SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT THAN OTHER SOVIET ALLIES. MUHAMMAD NOTES WRYLY THAT QADHAFI KNOWN AS "MISTER 400 PERCENT" AND SOVIETS LAUGHING ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK. FOUR HUNDRED PERCENT FIGURE ALSO FEATURES PROMINENTLY IN LENGTHY MUHAMMAD EXPOSE OF QADHAFI'S ACQUISITION (AT FOUR TIMES MARKET VALUE) OF 10 PERCENT OF FIAT STOCK. ARTICLE CHARGES THAT QADHAFI BOUGHT ACQUISCENCE OF CPI TO FIAT DEAL WITH $80,000 DURING 1976 ITALIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND THAT
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SOVIETS ARRANGED THE REST DIRECTLY WITH GIOVANNI AGNELLI, WHO WAS ATTEMPTING TO DIVEST SOME OF HIS HOLDINGS IN FIAT, PLAGUED BY LABOR TROUBLES AND MOUNTING COSTS. ARTICLE STATES THAT, AS ARRANGED BETWEEN SOVIETS AND AGNELLI, FIAT WINDFALL FROM QQDHAFI SUBSEQUENTLY INVESTED IN EXPANSION OF FIAT PLANT IN TOGLIATTIGRAD. MUHAMMAD ALSO DEVOTES CONSIDERABLE SPACE TO RETELLING SWINDLE OF QADHAFI OVER PURCHASE OF "STARTRON" NIGHT SCOPE, WHILE USG COMES IN FOR MILD CRITICISM OVER AMERICA'S INABILITY TO STAND UP TO SOVIET-CUBAN-LIBYAN MACHIN-ATIONS IN AFRICA. MUHAMMAD NOTES APPROVINGLY THAT WASHINGTON HAS HAD NO AMBASSADOR IN TRIPOLI SINCE DEPARTURE OF AMBASSADOR PALMER AND OPINES THAT QADHAFI'S NOTE TO PRESIDENT CARTER AFTER INAUGURATION MERELY PART OF A "DIALOGUE OF THE DEAF".

6. TERRORIST PLANS: OCTOBER MAGAZINE OF APRIL 24, DETAILS LIBYAN SPONSORED PLOT BY CARLOS TO ASSASSINATE U.S. AND OTHER AMBASSADORS IN ARAB COUNTRIES (SEPTEL).

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH EGYPTIANS WOULD NO DOUBT WELCOME

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SUCCESSFUL REPETITION OF ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, TONE OF
ARTICLES DOES NOT SUGGEST THAT QADHAFI'S DEMISE IMMINENT.
MUHAMMAD DOES MENTION THAT TWO STUDENTS AT BENGHAZI
UNIVERSITY CURRENTLY UNDER DEATH SENTENCE AND THAT QADHAFI
DELAYING EXECUTION FOR FEAR OF STUDENTS' RIOTING AS PROTEST,
BUT PRIMARY CONCERN APPEARS TO BE FATE OF EGYPTIANS IN LIBYA
AND LOSS OF EGYPTIAN REVENUE IF THEY EXPELLED. MUHAMMAD
OPINES THAT QADHAFI CONSUMATED FIAT DEAL IN PART TO PURSUADE
ITALIANS TO SEND SPECIALISTS TO LIBYA AND ALL DAILIES NOTE
ARRIVAL OF EASTERN EUROPEAN SPECIALISTS IN LIBYA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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SAS ID: 2709224
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To: STATE
Type: TE
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